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S E C R E T ABU DHABI 01331

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ACTION: ECON
INFO: RSO P/M AMB DCM POL LEGAT

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CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: CDA:RALBRIGHT
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INFO RUEHZM/GULF COOPERATION COUNCIL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 ABU DHABI 001331

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/23/2015
TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [ASEC](#) [QA](#) [TC](#)
SUBJECT: UAE INCREASES SECURITY AFTER BOMBING IN QATAR,
EXPATRIATE COMMUNITY CONCERNED, NOT PANICKED

Classified By: Richard Albright, Charge D'Affaires, a.i., for reasons 1
.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: After the Doha theater bombing, UAE officials markedly increased the security presence throughout the cities of Abu Dhabi and Dubai in locations such as diplomatic communities, western schools, and residential neighborhoods. UAEG officials are worried they are vulnerable to this type of attack. Local, diplomatic, and expatriate contacts are concerned that an attack could occur in the UAE, but there is not a sense of an imminent threat. End summary.

12. (S) An advisor to Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed told Charge March 22 that the Doha bombing had not so much altered the underlying security situation as it had brought home the reality that terrorists could lay hidden and dormant for a long time before striking. While he could point to no new or specific threat information, he highlighted a longstanding vulnerability -- that the UAE's 80 percent expatriate population and easy access could provide fertile ground for potential terrorists. To counter the possibility that they might now activate, the UAEG had taken the decision to boost security around the country. He stated that Dubai was the city they were most concerned about, because it was target rich and because Dubai is so loose about issuing visas. The advisor was critical of Qatar's security services, which he viewed as much less effective than those of the UAEG.

13. (C) ARSO learned from an Abu Dhabi police official that the Chief of Police had called an unprecedented meeting of his police commanders to underscore the seriousness with which the UAE government has taken the incident in Doha and to order internal police presence to the highest state of alert in recent years. The contact cited increased patrols of traffic police, protection police (Harasat), and plain clothes police (CID) around area schools and diplomatic

missions. Regarding the country's critical infrastructure, such as desalination plants and oil refineries, he said that they have bolstered security around these areas "like never before."

14. (C) ConGen Dubai security contacts, both in State Security (SSD) and the regular police, indicated that they were exercising greater vigilance in the aftermath of the Doha bombing, including increasing the numbers of patrols in Dubai's expat neighborhoods. One senior SSD contact expressed concern that the bomber -- a middle-aged Egyptian, with a decent job, who had resided in Doha for some time -- did not match the normal profile of a potential terrorist. He noted, however, that the GCC security forces share information, and expressed hope that the investigation in Doha would provide information that might be useful in the UAE, too.

15. (C) UAE special forces laid on double the normal protection for the visit of CENTAF Commander Buchanan for his March 21-22 visit. Embassy employees have commented on the increased patrols around the city, and our surveillance detection team has reported a significant increase in police patrols around the diplomatic quarter. The UAEG also responded rapidly to the Embassy's request for increased police presence at the chancellery and at the two American schools. They also boosted police presence at other western schools. One Embassy employee reported that two CCTV cameras were installed this week in a parking lot adjacent to his residential compound. RSO has learned that this compound is adjacent to a prominent Sheikh's meeting area (Majlis) and is probably the reason for the recent installation of the cameras.

16. (C) In a March 23 meeting of the Counter Terrorism Action Group (CTAG) organized by the UK Embassy (to be reported septel), western diplomats observed that UAE officials are staying vigilant, but not panicking. The French DCM characterized UAE security officials as "serene" in their confidence that nothing will happen in the UAE. The Canadian political officer noted that UAE officials believe they are more vulnerable to an attack like this week's bombing in Doha, as opposed to the type of extremist activity that occurred in Kuwait in January.

17. (C) The attack in neighboring Qatar left expatriates and UAE nationals in Abu Dhabi and Dubai worried that the UAE could be next. Some of our regular contacts talked about prominent targets and Western interests that terrorists might attack in hopes of frightening away expatriates and destabilizing the country's economy. CG Dubai spoke to American businessmen at an American Business Community (ABC) reception March 22. The consensus seemed to be that while there was concern about the Doha incident and what it might mean for Dubai, there was no sense of fear or panic among Americans. An Emirati gold and jewelry merchant told CG March 22 that the Doha explosion had caused a big stir in Dubai in part because the Briton who was killed in the explosion had lived in Dubai for years, working as a schoolteacher.

17. (SBU) The European Union chiefs of mission jointly decided to maintain their assessed threat level as a "high threat." Individually, several Embassies issued warden messages to their communities, but none reissued travel advisories in response to the attack in Doha. UK DCM reported that some British citizens have called the British Embassy asking for advice, but most of the diplomats present at the CTAG meeting said that their expatriate communities are remaining calm and do not seem to be overly concerned.

18. (S) COMMENT: The UAEG appears determined to do everything possible to deter terrorist attacks here. It is taking the Doha bombing as a warning and reacting with a visible increase in security. We are seeing no signs of panic here. Mission security contacts in Abu Dhabi and Dubai are projecting calm determination.
ALBRIGHT